

PERMITTING LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS TO HIRE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS POLICE EMPLOYEES

SPEECH OF

HON. JACK KINGSTON

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 20, 2004

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of this resolution that will restore the Librarian's authority to hire Library of Congress police employees. And I would like to thank my distinguished colleague for bringing this important resolution to the floor.

Madam Speaker, for the past ten months, the Librarian has been without the authority to hire police officers. The result of which has been a significant deficit in the Library's ability to meet its security mission to protect the Library's vast collection and ensure the safety of Members, staff, and visitors in the Library. His authority was repealed in a provision inserted in the last year's conference report by the other body, which also mandated our own United States Capitol Police to detail their officers to the Library, even though the Capitol Police currently lack the jurisdictional authority to police the Library's buildings. This was done in an effort to circumvent the jurisdiction of the appropriate oversight committees who have been engaged in evaluating the merits of merging the two agencies and force the beginnings of a merger of the Library's police force and the U.S. Capitol Police.

The Chairman's committee has been performing his appropriate oversight by reviewing several draft memorandums between the Capitol Police and the Library outlining the detail of officers to the Library. During this process, a multitude of questions have risen to the surface regarding not only how to merge the agencies, but really whether the security of the Capitol complex would be improved if they did merge. I do not believe that there will be any measurable improvement in the overall security. I believe that it is merely a way for the Capitol Police to expand their jurisdiction. I do not support Capitol Police officers being detailed to the Library in what can only be interpreted as a pilot program for a merger. And I certainly do not support the current effort of the other body to merge the Library of Congress police with the Capitol Police.

Additionally, the time and attention being paid to fix the current situation that the Library and the Capitol Police have been put in is putting unnecessary strain on the agencies and distracting them from their primary missions during a crucial time.

Madam Speaker I agree with the Chairman Ney's comments that this growing need for officers at the Library is the Congress' own creation and we need to fix it. Madam Speaker it is vitally important to the security of the Capitol complex that we restore the Librarian's authority to hire police officers. And I will work to ensure that they have the necessary funds to train and pay the officers that will be hired to fill the current manpower gap. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution.

TRIBUTE TO DONALD R. ENGLAND

HON. LANE EVANS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 8, 2004

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the service and sacrifice of Donald R. England. "Don," as his friends called him, had a distinguished career with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, serving our nation's disabled veterans and their families. Don died from cancer July 2, 2004, in Carbon Cliff, Illinois, at the age of 57. He was buried July 6 in East Moline, Illinois.

Don was born August 18, 1946, in Moline, the son of Robert and Margaret "Jane" (Simpson) England. He was a graduate of United Township High School, Class of 1964, and Northern Illinois University, Class of 1968, where he earned his Degree in Music. He served in the U.S. Army from 1968–1971, where he was stationed in Washington D.C., and played in the U.S. Army Band.

In 1974, while living in Bogota, Colombia, Don played in the Bogota Symphony. In 1976, Don began his career with the Department of Veterans Affairs in the Chicago Regional Office. He held several positions of increasing authority in the Chicago office before coming to VA Central Office as a consultant for Compensation and Pension Service in 1988.

In 1990, Don was promoted to Chief of the Regulations Staff of the Compensation and Pension Service, a position he held until he retired earlier this year due to illness. In that position, he supervised the writing and maintenance of all the VA rules providing compensation and pension benefits for disabled veterans and their families. Don was considered one of the most knowledgeable people in VA regarding those benefit programs. In addition, he was loved and respected by his colleagues for his hard work and compassion to others.

I urge my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Donald R. England and in offering our condolences to his family for their loss.

EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR DISASTER RELIEF ACT, 2004

SPEECH OF

HON. STEPHANIE HERSETH

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 7, 2004

Ms. HERSETH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the emergency supplemental appropriation that will provide financial relief to the residents of Florida that have suffered from the devastation of Hurricanes Charley and Frances. Tragically, this disaster has cost several lives. It also has cost the State of Florida billions of dollars and threatened the livelihood of countless Floridians. I am pleased to voice my support for this legislation.

I am particularly pleased to support this bill because of my perspective as a South Dakotan. We have never suffered a hurricane in my home State—it is one of the many blessings of living in South Dakota. We do, however, suffer from our own brand of weather-related disaster that can be just as economically devastating as a hurricane and be spread over an

even wider geographic area. This weather phenomenon is known as a drought.

Over the past several years, many counties in my home State have suffered from severe drought. In fact, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture has declared 30 counties as drought disaster areas this year alone. Right now, USDA estimates that more than 53 percent of my State is either short—or critically short—of topsoil moisture.

Droughts have ramifications across the entire economic spectrum and social fabric of the State. South Dakota is extremely reliant on the ability of our farmers and ranchers to harvest the bounty of the land and turn that into a profit. Without rain, grass does not grow and watering holes go dry. This forces ranchers to liquidate assets—their cattle herds. Without rain, corn, wheat, and other grains do not grow and farmers have no crop to market at the end of the year.

A successful harvest turns into new clothes, college tuition, home improvements, and farm equipment. The profit that farmers and ranchers receive from the land circulates up and down the main streets of South Dakota's small towns. It pays the mortgages and salaries of thousands of small merchants and service providers. A drought can devastate an economy in exactly the same way that a hurricane can.

I urge my colleagues to support the well-deserved relief that this bill will provide for the victims of these hurricanes. It is the right thing to do. In doing so however, I also request that, if you hear about those suffering quietly from the effects of a drought, you are aware of how devastating this can be and will support relief for this type of weather disaster as well.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 8, 2004

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, on September 7, 2004, I was unavoidably absent from this chamber. I would like the record to show that, had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall votes 422 and 423.

PILOT POINT SELECTED AS A PRESERVE AMERICA COMMUNITY

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 8, 2004

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, it is my great honor to rise today to recognize the Town of Pilot Point, Texas as a Preserve America Community. Pilot Point, located in my North Texas District, was one of 26 Texas cities to receive this prestigious designation.

The Preserve America Community program recognizes communities for their dedication to protecting and celebrating America's cultural heritage; for using their historic assets for increased economic growth and community revitalization; and for promoting history education and historical tourism.

The Preserve America Community program is part of the White House's Preserve America